

NOT PUBLIC UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT
OF
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DEPUTY COMMANDANT FOR MANPOWER & RESERVE AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL
OF THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
CONCERNING
MILITARY PERSONNEL OVERVIEW
ON
MARCH 17, 2011**

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Chairman Wilson, Ranking Member Davis, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, it is my privilege to appear before you today to provide an overview on Marine Corps personnel.

I. Your Marines

Americans expect their Marines to be ready to respond when our country is threatened; to arrive on the scene anywhere in the world with minimal notice; and to fight and win our Nation's battles. To this end, the individual Marine is the Corps' most sacred resource and, as Deputy Commandant for Manpower & Reserve Affairs, Marines *are* my mission.

The young men and women who fill our ranks today recognize the global, protracted, and lethal nature of the challenges facing our Nation, and their dedicated service and sacrifice rival that of any generation preceding them. Marines and their families know that their sacrifices are making a difference, that they are part of something much larger than themselves, and that their Nation stands behind them.

II. End Strength

In FY10, the Marine Corps achieved both its accession and retention missions and maintained its 202,100 Active Component end strength. For FY11, we continue with this success, meeting all recruiting and retention missions, and the quality of our force has never been higher. At the end of FY11, we project an end strength of 202,576 (including estimated 326 Reservists who have served on active duty for three of the previous four years).

Even with our retention and overall end strength successes, the Marine Corps must continue to shape our force to meet continuing requirements, fill critical military occupational specialties (MOSs), and retain vital leadership with combat experience. Bonuses remain critical to this effort, allowing the Marine Corps to fill hard to recruit positions, such as crypto linguists

and reconnaissance. Enlistment bonuses also allow us to ship new recruits at critical times to balance recruit loads at the depots and meet school seat requirements. Finally, it is important to note that only eight percent of new recruits receive an enlistment bonus, and the Marine Corps budget for enlistment bonuses has decreased from \$75 million in FY08 to \$14.7 million in FY12.

Selective Reenlistment Bonuses (SRBs) similarly allow us to shape our career force. SRBs target critical MOSs and allow us to laterally move Marines to these MOSs. There are currently 14 of 211 occupational specialties where the on-hand number of Marines is less than 90 percent of what is required. It is critical that we meet our first-term retention goals. It should be noted that our SRB funding has decreased from \$468 million in FY09 to \$108.6 million in FY12.

Your Marine Corps already provides the “best value” for the defense dollar. At any given time, approximately 30,000 Marines are forward-deployed in operations supporting our Nation’s defense.

III. Marine Corps Reserve

Our reserves continue to make essential contributions to our Total Force efforts in Overseas Contingency Operations. Over the last few years, as we concentrated on building our Active Component to 202,100, we fell short of our Reserve Component authorized end strength of 39,600. In 2009 and 2010, we refocused our recruiting and retention efforts toward achieving this end strength. These efforts included increasing our reserve non-prior service recruiting mission, lowering our attrition, doubling our incentives budget from \$12 million to \$24 million, and expanding the population eligible to receive incentives. As a result, we achieved over 99 percent of our authorized end strength in FY10. Though our incentives budget has been reduced to \$8.7 million in FY11, we project an end strength of 39,559, less than one percent below our authorized level.

Our focus has now shifted to targeting our incentives to critically short specialties and grades within units identified for future deployments in support of operational requirements. Company grade officer recruiting remains our most challenging area. Historically, our Active Component has been the exclusive source of senior lieutenants and captains for the Marine Corps Reserve, and it remains a center of gravity in meeting our company grade requirements. Through our transition assistance and educational outreach programs, we continue to ensure that each transitioning Active Component Marine is educated on opportunities to continue their service in the Marine Corps Reserve.

To compliment the Active-to-Reserve Component company grade accessions, we continue to offer three recently implemented reserve commissioning initiatives: the Reserve Enlisted Commissioning Program; the Meritorious Commissioning Program – Reserve; and the Officer Candidate Course – Reserve (OCC-R). Since 2004, these three programs have produced a total of 330 lieutenants for the Marine Corps Reserve. The OCC-R program has been the most successful of the three reserve commissioning initiatives. It focuses on ground billets with an emphasis on ground combat and combat service support within specific reserve units that are scheduled for mobilization. The Reserve Officer Commissioning Programs and affiliation bonuses are keys to meeting grade strength requirements in critical billets by the end of FY15. We are also looking at increasing the ceiling for officer affiliation bonuses to attract officers to chronically hard-to-fill units.

Altogether, these programs, combined with our prior service recruiting efforts, should provide for at least 90 percent manning of critical combat arms and engineer company grade officer billets by September 30, 2015.

IV. Recruiting

The Marine Corps is unique in that all recruiting efforts (officer, enlisted, regular, reserve, and prior-service) fall under the direction of the Marine Corps Recruiting Command. Operationally, this provides us with tremendous flexibility and unity of command in order to annually meet our objectives.

Our recruiters continue to make their recruiting goals in all areas in support of our Total Force. Our focus is always to recruit quality men and women with the right character, commitment, and drive. To meet the challenges in today's recruiting environment, it is imperative that we maintain our high standards both for our recruiters and those who volunteer to serve in our Corps. We also remain mindful that the Marine Corps should reflect the diverse face of our Nation and be representative of those we serve.

In FY10, we achieved over 100 percent of our enlisted and officer recruiting goals for both the Active and Reserve Components. We accessed over 99 percent Tier 1 high school diploma graduates and over 72 percent in the upper Mental Groups of I-IIIs, both exceeding Department of Defense quality standards.

In FY11, we will again meet our annual recruiting mission, to include all quality goals. Additionally, we expect to have a strong population of qualified individuals ready to ship to recruit training as we enter FY12.

Filling company grade officer billets for our Selected Marine Corps Reserve units is traditionally our greatest challenge. As mentioned above, the OCC-R has proven to be the most successful of our reserve officer recruiting programs.

We thank you for the generous support you have provided to us and look forward to working with you to ensure success in the future.

V. Retention

Retention complements recruiting as one of the vital elements of building and sustaining the Marine Corps. For enlisted retention, we seek to retain the best and brightest Marines in both our first-term and career force to provide proven technical skills, experience, and non-commissioned officer and staff non-commissioned officer leadership needed to meet our demanding mission.

In FY10, the Marine Corps reenlisted 14,265 Marines. This achievement represented a 28 percent retention rate among the eligible First Term Alignment Plan (FTAP) population compared to a historical average of 24 percent. We also achieved an unprecedented 79 percent retention rate among the career Subsequent Term Alignment Plan (STAP) population, the highest ever, while maintaining all quality standards.

For FY11, retention achievement remains on track and exceptionally strong. As of March 2, 2011, we have achieved approximately 90 percent of our FTAP and 104 percent of our STAP goals, respectively.

Our continuing retention success remains largely attributable to two important, enduring themes. First, Marines are truly motivated to “stay Marine” because they are doing what they signed up to do — fighting for and protecting our Nation. Second, they understand our service culture is one that rewards proven performance and takes care of its own.

VI. Diversity

The Marine Corps is committed to making concerted efforts to attract, mentor and retain the most talented men and women who bring a diversity of background, culture and skill in service to our Nation. Our diversity effort is structured with the understanding that the objective

of diversity is not merely to achieve representational parity, but to raise total capability through leveraging the strengths and talents of each and every Marine. The success of our pioneering Female Engagement Team program in Afghanistan, which is an offshoot of a similar effort we employed in Iraq, is one way that the Marine Corps utilizes diversity within our ranks for operational benefit.

We are currently developing a comprehensive, Service-wide strategy on diversity, an effort facilitated through our standing Diversity Review Board and a Diversity Executive Steering Committee chartered to establish the foundations for diversity success in the Total Force. The Marine Corps has established minority officer recruiting and mentoring as the highest priority in our recruiting efforts. Along with the other Services, we have provided timely input to the Congressionally sanctioned Military Leadership Diversity Commission and look forward to release of the Commission's final report scheduled for March 2011.

VII. Keeping Faith with Marines, Sailors and Families.

Just as our Marines are required to be in a constant state of readiness, so must our families. Our Nation has been at war for a decade, placing unprecedented burdens on Marines, Sailors, families, wounded warriors and the dependents of the fallen. We know that in order to develop, maintain, and sustain their personal and family readiness and resiliency, we must provide innovative programs and services that are timely and relevant. Our approach to caring for Marines, families and relatives of our fallen Marines is based on our unwavering loyalty. This concept also applies to single and married Marines, families, wounded warriors and Marines transitioning from the service.

In his 2010 Planning Guidance, our Commandant directed us to "look across the entire institution and identify areas that need improvement and effect positive change." Specifically, he directed us to evaluate all of our family readiness programs to determine which require enhancement and/or expansion and which can be streamlined to reduce redundancy. This is not just about efficiencies; it is also about effectiveness. As part of that mandate, we have been directed to continue our behavioral health program integration, institutionalize resiliency training, and reorganize and improve our Transition Assistance Management Program.

Family Readiness. In 2010, the Marine Corps increased baseline funding for family support programs by \$110 million to ensure an appropriate wartime footing. Programs benefitting from this measure include: Unit, Personal and Family Readiness Program; Marine Corps Family Team Building Program; Exceptional Family Member Program; School Liaison Program; and other miscellaneous Marine Corps Community Services Programs supporting remote and isolated commands, deployed Marines, and independent duty Marines and families. As we continue the process of providing Marines and their families with the most effective and relevant services, we are assessing all of our family support programs, identifying gaps and overlapping or duplicative efforts, and looking for opportunities to develop partnership programs and share resources with other agencies.

Some of our notable accomplishments include the following:

- Established over 400 full-time civilian Family Readiness Officers to facilitate family contact and provide critical information and referral services to support the resiliency needs of Marines and their families.
- Developed an inventory of Deployed Support and LifeSkills Education and Training courses to address the challenges of military, personal, and family life.
- Transformed the Exceptional Family Member Program to ensure that enrolled family members are provided a continuum of care, while providing the sponsor the opportunity for a successful career.

- Established school liaisons who form strong partnerships with schools and other supporting agencies to improve access and availability to quality education.
- Implemented program and infrastructure enhancements at remote and isolated commands, including investments in child care, single Marine programming, fitness and recreation centers, and recreational equipment to support deployed Marines.
- Increased Marine Corps child care capability from 64 percent to 73 percent with projection to meet 80 percent of potential need by FY12.
- Partnered with the Marine Corps Recruiting Command (MCRC) to conduct the first online survey of all MCRC personnel and their spouses in order to assess their views on key quality of life issues (financial, housing, health care, communication, and services) and to determine any perceived gaps in support.

Deployed and Warrior Support. Deployed support is one of the most important services we provide. Our Exchange, Recreation and Fitness, and Communication services not only boost and maintain morale but also help to reduce mission-related stress.

- ***Exchange.*** Ongoing missions in Afghanistan include the operation of two Direct Operation Exchanges at Camps Leatherneck and Dwyer, and one Tactical Field Exchange at Camp Delaram II.
- ***Recreation and Fitness.*** We assist in providing sports, recreational, and fitness equipment to units throughout Helmand Province with the joint support of USFOR-AJI. This transportable equipment includes sports/recreation cooler kits filled with sports gear and board games, electronic game kits, Theater-in-a-Box kits, and fitness equipment for use in austere environments.
- ***Communication.*** Morale satellite services are available to forward operating bases, combat outposts, and other austere locations. We have delivered 13 satellite communications systems to units in Afghanistan. Each system has two phones that provide 6000 free minutes per month and five laptops that allow internet browsing, social networking and chat/video capabilities to deployed Marines.

Family Care Programs

Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP). The most tender of our families, those enrolled in the Marine Corps EFMP, have strongly endorsed the improvements we have made to their level of support and to providing a continuum of care. Year after year since our program

expansion, we have gained the trust of our families. This is demonstrated through increasing enrollments and reduction in issues experienced by families relocating to new duty stations. I am proud to state that DoD and the other Services recognize our EFMP as a premier, full-service program based on the quality and efficiency of program operations.

Our EFMP sponsors will always be an advocate for their special needs family member, but when families need legal help, our EFMP attorneys are ready to assist with obtaining benefits and services under federal and state education and disability laws, special needs trusts, landlord-tenant issues and other legal areas.

In 2001, EFMP had 4,500 enrolled family members. This number has grown to over 9,850 today. We believe our prevalence for special needs in the Marine Corps is between 12,000-18,000 family members and that our enrollments will continue to increase.

In the past year, we have taken multiple actions to transform the program, including:

- Utilizing Family Case Workers to support families during relocation, deployments, and life events and to assist families with gaining access to medical, educational, and financial support services.
- Establishing installation-level Training Education Outreach specialists to provide training and support for families and the programs that support them.
- Utilizing a Continuation on Location policy that ensures the assignment and relocation process is sensitive to EFMP family needs and meets statutory stabilization requirements.

In addition, the Marine Corps continues to underwrite the cost of up to 40 hours of short-term respite care per month for enrolled families. To date, we have provided more than 450,000 hours of respite care. Since the cost is underwritten by the Marine Corps, families are able to use their TRICARE Extended Care Health Option benefit for needed therapies and equipment.

Nevertheless, challenges remain, such as:

- the lack of portability of services for adults with autism;

- the inability of military families to gain access to Medicaid;
- the difficulty in accessing therapeutic and mental health support, such as adult and pediatric care; and
- national economic impacts and subsequent state budget cuts, particularly at local and state levels, which may impede school districts' abilities to provide special education services.

To address some of the state access issues, we have partnered with the National Council on Disability to study this problem. Results are under review.

Children, Youth and Teen Programs. Whether parents are working, experiencing family emergencies, or needing respite from single parent responsibilities connected to deployments, child care services remain a high priority quality of life requirement. In 2010, we provided 13,431 child care spaces and met 73 percent of potential need requirements. Within these totals, we are caring for approximately 2,500 special needs children.

The Marine Corps, with your support, is executing an aggressive military construction program and is opening six new child development centers in FY11 and five more in FY12. Nevertheless, as you might expect, the demand for quality child care on-and-off installation continues to grow and outweighs the availability of resources. To address this growing demand and help further define requirements, we are working on a Child Development Program and Facility Master Plan. This plan will evaluate on-and-off-base access, unmet need, and will provide prioritized recommendations for meeting the need across the Marine Corps. We anticipate results this summer.

In 2011, we will work with Marine Forces Reserve and MCRC to identify opportunities to enhance availability of child care for Marines and their families serving on independent duty and at locations that are separated from military bases and stations. In addition, we are partnering with the Boys & Girls Clubs of America for developmental youth programs, and working to identify ways to better support our youth and teens affected by a parent's

deployment. We have reviewed the results of the National Military Family Association and RAND Study related to impacts on youth from deployments and are considering ways to address this situation.

School Liaison Program. To help school-aged children of Marines flourish in new school environments, our School Liaison Program partners with Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to raise the educational capacity and academic performance of our military children. Supporting more than 80 school districts surrounding major Marine Corps installations, our school liaisons provide LEAs with information on Marine Corps families' needs and access to beneficial training and counseling services. Marine parents have the comfort of talking with and being supported by a local education expert who provides meaningful insight and support to new transfers and those with questions on local education policies. In addition, school liaisons provide Marine parents with connections to online curricular resources that are linked to state standards, permanent change-of-station checklists to assist with pre-relocation planning and registration in the receiving school districts, on-line tutoring and other resources.

Personal and Professional Development. Our Commandant has directed the Marine Corps to conduct a "bottom up" assessment of our Transition Assistance Management Program and our Lifelong Learning Program to revolutionize the process, embrace best practices, and ensure we are providing the right educational and career assistance to Marines leaving the Corps. Today, our program is primarily a training event. We have established a goal to transform this from an event into a process and to make the Marine Corps' Transition Assistance Management Program a model for DoD.

From 2009 to 2010, the Marine Corps conducted functionality assessments of the Transition Assistance Management Program and the Lifelong Learning Program and noted many deficiencies. In response, we established two Transition Assistance Operational Planning Teams in 2010 to assess existing programs. These teams identified issues, stakeholders and a conceptual framework for improved services and ways to integrate Marine Corps Community Services transition assets. Key stakeholders involved in this process include service member recruiters, commanders, Unit Transition Coordinators, and most importantly -- our Marines and their family members.

With our predominately first-term force, we are committed to reaching our Marines at designated touch points, helping them develop roadmaps that support their Marine careers, and better equipping them to reintegrate back into civilian life upon leaving active duty service. We have developed an end-to-end process improvement plan, are initiating actions, and are integrating existing capabilities that directly improve the quality of support provided to our Marines. In the future, our transition assistance will become a personal and professional development process that will reintegrate Marines into the civilian sector with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to better leverage their Marine Corps time and experience into meaningful careers. Some of our actions include:

- Establishing the new Personal and Professional Development program and incorporating “transition assistance” with a continuum of services designed to fully exploit the potential of all Marines and prepare them to transition to civilian life.
- Establishing formal processes to initiate periodic lifecycle contact to offer education, career, and financial advice/counseling to Marines and their families.
- Creating an Individual Development Plan, with execution and delivery of required transition services.
- Assisting Marines with navigating the Department of Veterans Affairs benefit process. Based on feedback from surveyed Marines, we know they want and need

this kind of assistance. To address this issue, we will modify existing websites to improve access and enhance opportunities for separating Marines to speak directly to Marine Corps support personnel who are trained to remove benefit processing barriers.

- Expanding public and private sector employment opportunities. We know from our surveys that Marines do not expect a "job handout". Rather, they want to be leaders and strong contributors to our Nation. They have told us that they want to improve their networking skills and learn how to connect with employers and mentors. We are in the process of revamping our transition workshops to focus on these needs and are working on ways to incorporate more networking opportunities into our job fairs.
- Connecting and expanding available educational opportunities. The Post-9/11 GI Bill provides Marines a wonderful educational opportunity. In an effort to expand this opportunity, we have initiated a Leader Scholar Program on the west coast which includes academic institutions who value Marines' service commitment and pledge to provide them special enrollment consideration; we now have 75 participating institutions and have a goal of 100 by the end of this year.
- Assisting Marines with education enrollment processes to enable them to gain access to academic institutions that provide business education skills that private industry demands.
- Improving the current Active-to-Reserve transition process to better educate Marines on reserve opportunities to retain the best talent. An enhanced, streamlined transition process will increase the number of valuable, trained Marines who consciously choose to affiliate with the Reserves.

We believe our efforts will result in an innovative program that addresses the Commandant's concerns, assists our families with their education and career goals, and meets the needs of our Marines as they progress through their military life cycle, whether a single enlistment or a lifetime of military service, and transition to a successful post-military career.

Behavioral Health Integration. Sixty-four percent of our Marines are under 25 years-old. Associated with this young force are inherent high-risk factors that include relationship and coping skills, isolation, combat-related wounds, and substance abuse. Furthermore, since 9/11, behavioral health needs have become increasingly complex with individuals often requiring assistance in a number of areas at one time. The anticipated drawdown of Marines deployed to

Afghanistan will likely result in additional behavioral healthcare requirements as Marines return and re-adjust to the garrison environment.

Marines with three or more deployments have been identified as particularly at risk. As a result, our Combat Operational Stress Control (COSC) Program is currently developing a policy that will direct commanders to conduct face-to-face interviews with Marines who have had three or more deployments. These commanders' interviews will identify Marines at some level of elevated risk, allow commanders to engage their Marines (pre-and-post-deployment), and provide an opportunity for intervention (medical and non-medical).

As directed by the Commandant, we continue to move forward with fully integrating our Marine Corps behavioral health programs - Family Advocacy, Combat Operational Stress Control, Suicide Prevention, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, and Substance Abuse. We have established a Behavioral Health Branch at our headquarters for Marine and Family Programs, Manpower & Reserve Affairs, and are working to ensure that the programs and services that stem from this integration will be seamlessly woven into the larger support network of command structures and the health and human services across the Corps and are in concert with building resilience and strengthening Marines and families.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response. Marine Corps' leadership has initiated aggressive actions to elevate and highlight the importance of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program and institutionalize a zero-tolerance policy. SAPR is focused on several key initiatives:

- ***Prevention:*** Commanders are accountable for creating a climate in which sexual assault will not be tolerated and building trust within their units that enables victims of sexual assault to report the crime. Bystander intervention training has been identified as an evidence-based best practice for engaging Marines in their role in sexual assault prevention. New video-based bystander intervention training is in development with a completion date of April 2011.

- ***Risk Reduction:*** Alcohol has a tremendous impact on the prevalence of sexual assault. Research on best practices for addressing risk reduction, consent, and raising awareness within the Marine Corps is forthcoming in 2011.
- ***Offender Accountability:*** The Trial Counsel Assistance Program and a Joint Mobile Training Team were implemented in 2010 to provide training for 40 Marine Corps investigators and prosecutors on best practices in handling sex crimes. Following-up on the success of the Case Review Project in 2009, the Judge Advocate Division Military Law Branch is reviewing closed cases of sexual assault to develop lessons learned. This information will be disseminated in the form of training techniques for investigators and prosecutors.
- ***Victim Advocacy:*** During 2010, SAPR Program Managers were hired at 18 installations to heighten sexual assault prevention efforts by serving as master trainers and reporting coordinators. A 24/7 Helpline was established across all installations to provide victims with emotional support, information on reporting options, and critical resources.

Suicide Prevention. During Calendar Year 2010, we saw a nearly 30 percent decrease in the number of suicides within our Total Force (52 in CY2009; 37 in CY2010). Yet even one suicide is still one too many. It is premature for us to be able to identify what specific initiative(s) have resulted in this decrease. For the past several years, we have been, and will continue to be, engaged on multiple fronts:

- Established a DSTRESS Line pilot in TRICARE Region West for all our Marines, Sailors, and families which provides 24/7, anonymous counseling designed to assist with problems at an early stage. The phones are manned by veteran Marines, our former corpsmen, and by licensed counselors specifically trained in our culture.
- Leadership engagement and discussion of issues at senior leader forums and Executive Force Preservation Boards.
- Our “Never Leave a Marine Behind” suicide prevention training series is being expanded. In November 2010, we provided a junior Marine module as well as an update to the existing award-winning NCO module. In development for release in March 2011 are SNCO and officer modules that will help leaders to manage command climate in a way that builds resilience and encourages help-seeking in their Marines.
- Working with the American Association of Suicidology to develop training programs for unit-level prevention officers.

We believe our training and other prevention efforts will help our Marines and their family members maintain readiness and win their personal battles.

Combat and Operational Stress Control (COSC) - Resiliency Training. Stress issues affect all Marines and families regardless of deployment. Assisting Marines who show signs of stress and preventing combat and operational stress is one of our highest leadership priorities. To improve their resilience, we are working aggressively and creatively to build a training continuum that better prepares them for the inevitable stress of combat operations and to equip them with the necessary skills required in coping with the challenges of life as a Marine.

Instruction founded and focused on our core values helps provide some of this resilience and enables effective operations, especially in irregular warfare and complex environments. A program combining the “best practices” of mental, spiritual and physical fitness will instill in our Marines the resiliency to better endure the stressors of combat.

Our COSC program's goal is to help Commanders and Marine leaders maintain their warfighting capabilities and, with assistance from medical personnel, reduce the impact of negative stress reactions. By providing tools and resources to assist Marines with coping with the challenges of combat and the rigor of life as a Marine, our COSC program implements activities focusing on force preservation and readiness and the long-term health and well-being of our Marines and their families. COSC, with other behavioral health initiatives, aggressively combats these problems by strengthening Marines, mitigating stress, identifying those who are at risk, and providing treatment when necessary, with the overall goal of reintegrating Marines back into the force.

Our Operational Stress Control and Readiness Program (OSCAR) embeds mental health professionals in operational units and provides training that helps the OSCAR team identify and

mitigate negative stress reactions. The OSCAR team is comprised of three groups: Providers (mental health professionals), Extenders (other medical and religious personnel), and Mentors (selected unit Marines) who are trained to quickly intervene when Marines show signs of stress reactions. Currently over 1,500 Marines are trained as mentors.

In FY11, COSC will sustain and improve OSCAR training by conducting a RAND evaluation, working with units who utilized OSCAR training while in combat environments, and providing refresher training to OSCAR trainers. Extenders are receiving formal OSCAR training at Field Medical Schools, which began in January 2011 and which also supports institutionalizing OSCAR enhancing resiliency training.

Our COSC program continues to show positive results as indicated by outside evaluations and assessments. Despite increased exposure to heavy combat, Marines surveyed in Afghanistan in July 2010 indicated increased protective factors including unit resilience, small-unit cohesion, perceived readiness, and improved climate towards asking for help. This assessment also revealed increased training effectiveness in managing combat/deployment stress and significant reduction in stigma associated with seeking behavioral health treatment.

Casualty Assistance. The Marine Corps' Casualty Assistance Program is committed to ensuring that families of our fallen Marines are always treated with the utmost compassion, dignity, and honor. Our Casualty Assistance Program actively seeks opportunities to improve survivor assistance and has a demonstrated record of taking quick, effective action as needed.

The Headquarters Casualty Section is a 24-hour-per-day operation manned by Marines trained in casualty reporting, notification, and casualty assistance procedures. Next-of-kin (NOK) are notified in-person by a Marine in uniform - a Casualty Assistance Calls Officer (CACO) - and a chaplain whenever possible. Notifications are typically completed within four

hours of receipt of the casualty report. Marine CACOs are there for the NOK - to assist with burial arrangements, applications for benefits and entitlements, contact with benevolent and philanthropic organizations, and obtaining reports of investigation.

Within days of the incident, families are connected to representatives from the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), a nationally recognized provider of comfort and care to those who have suffered the loss of a military loved one and are experts at "taking care of the heart". TAPS services are no-cost and available 24/7.

Approximately 60 days following the death, we reach out to the NOK to help resolve any residual issues and let them know we are available to them for as long as they need us.

VIII. Wounded Warrior Regiment

In his 2010 Planning Guidance, our Commandant reiterated his commitment to “enhance the capabilities of the Wounded Warrior Regiment to provide added care and support to our wounded injured and ill (WII).” Moreover, he affirmed the need to sustain the Regiment for the long- term given the wounds of the war and that the Regiment also provides care for our Marines who are not combat wounded, but are injured in training or other accidents, suffer from diseases, and other tragedies. Congress and the Nation may rest assure that the Marine Corps, through the Regiment, will continue to meet the Commandant’s intent and the needs of this Nation’s wounded, ill, and injured (WII) Marines.

The Regiment serves the Marine Corps Total Force – active duty, reserve, retired and veteran Marines. It is positioned in locations around the country and abroad in order to establish a personal relationship with WII Marines and their families. Its strategic reach allows for resources and services to be delivered to WII Marines and their families regardless of their

recovery location. The Regiment maintains administrative and operational control of two Wounded Warrior Battalions located at Camp Pendleton, CA, and Camp Lejeune, NC. Each battalion has detachments located at military treatment facilities and Department of Veterans Affairs Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers. The span of the Regiment extends across the globe from Landstuhl, Germany, to Okinawa, Japan, and throughout the continental United States.

The complexity of WII Marines' care requires a heightened level of coordination between various medical and non-medical care providers. There is no "one size fits all" approach to care and the Regiment delivers a cross-section of services and resources to WII Marines and families. We continue to refine our support capabilities and grow our care model to ensure we promote healing the "whole" Marine. Through synchronization of our programs and resources and external programs, we strive to help each WII Marine focus on their abilities to heal medically while strengthening their mind, body, spirit, and family through mandatory participation in programs covering a wide range of activities, such as academic endeavors, internships, physical fitness, and community service. Highlights of our program include:

- **Marine Section Leaders.** The Section Leader combines the discipline and standards of the Marine Corps with an understanding of the obstacles WII Marines face, while serving as their advocate to ensure coordinated medical and non-medical recovery efforts. Section Leaders are key to the recovery process as they oversee the integration of the Marine's medical recovery process with productive and meaningful non-medical activities that build strong minds, bodies, and spirits.
- **Recovery Care Coordinators.** The Regiment has a fully operational Recovery Coordination Program. Recovery Care Coordinators (RCCs) are assigned to certain active duty WII Marines to help them and their families develop Comprehensive Transition Plans to define and meet their individual goals for recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration. RCCs and Section Leaders work together to help WII Marines transition. RCCs serve as the ultimate point of contact for WII Marines to help them identify needs, define goals, and meet their goals.
- **Medical Section.** The Regiment's Medical Section includes a Regimental Surgeon, Nurse Case Manager, and Clinical Services staff who work with public and private medical providers to ensure the best care for WII Marines, particularly in the areas of

Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). They also work hand-in-hand with the Bureau of Navy Medicine to environmentally scan for new and emerging treatment protocols and advise the commanding officer regarding medical issues and emerging technologies and treatments impacting WII Marines.

- **Warrior Athlete Reconditioning (WAR) Program.** The Regiment's WAR Program strengthens the Marine's body through physical activity and nutrition to develop life-long healthy habits. Under this program, Marines engage in both physical and cognitive activities outside the traditional therapy setting. Activities are individualized to the WII Marines' needs, and encompass over 18 areas – from aquatic training to yoga.
- **Family Support.** Support for WII Marines and families is unique and staff often perform non-traditional family support roles at all of its locations. Family support staff often work in hospital-type environments and rely on non-traditional resources, such as charitable organizations, Veterans Service Organizations, and federal and state agencies.
- **Reserve Support.** Our Reserve Medical Entitlements Determination Section maintains oversight of all cases involving reservists who require medical care beyond their contract period for service-connected ailments. The Regiment also has reserve-specific RCCs who provide one-on-one support and resource identification for reservists who often residing in remote and isolated locations.
- **Transition Support.** To enhance community reintegration, the Regiment's Transition Support Cell, manned by Marines and representatives from the Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs, proactively reaches out to identify employers and job-training programs that help WII Marines obtain positions in which they are most likely to succeed and enjoy promising and fulfilling careers.
- **District Injured Support Cells.** Our District Injured Support Cells are mobilized reserve Marines located throughout the country to conduct face-to-face visits and telephone outreach to WII Marines and their families. They maintain oversight of the welfare and quality of life of all WII Marines convalescing at home and all OEF/OIF WII Marine veterans.
- **Sergeant Merlin German Wounded Warrior Call Center.** Our Sergeant Merlin German Wounded Warrior Call Center extends support to Marines and families through advocacy, resource identification and referral, information distribution, and care coordination. The Call Center has clinical services staff who provide immediate assistance and referral for Marines with psychological health issues and/or PTS/TBI. Outreach is an important aspect of our non-medical care delivery and management. The Call Center also conducts outreach calls to offer assistance on a wide variety of issues, such as service disability ratings, awards, employment, financial assistance, education, and benevolent organizations. A recent feature to the Call Center is the addition of social media experts who actively manage the Regiment's Facebook page.

The Marine Corps is committed to the long-term care of its wounded warriors and their families and will continue to provide for their care. As warrior care evolves and innovates, we will continue to adjust to ensure we are providing the best support possible. Your WII Marines are highly motivated, focused on their abilities, and remain in the fight. The Marine Corps is grateful for the exceptional support that you have provided to our Marines and the families who support them.

IX. Civilian Marines

Civilian Marines provide an invaluable service to the Corps as an integral component of our Total Force. With a population of 35,000, the civilian workforce is as lean and efficient as our active duty forces. The ratio of civilians to Marines is 1:6, compared to about 1:2 in the other Services and DoD-wide. Civilian Marines work in true partnership with our Marines and play an important role in current combat operations, research and development, and acquisition. They are critical assets which provide support to the Total Force, especially our Marines returning from deployment and their families, and to Base and Station operations. Civilians are the “force multiplier,” enabling our Marines to accomplish missions across all aspects of expeditionary operations and warfare. Dozens of civilians are currently forward deployed supporting combat operations. The civilian labor budget represents less than 5 percent of the Marine Corps FY12 budgetary submission, demonstrating that our “best value” for the defense dollar applies to our civilians as well as our Marines.

X. Conclusion

As we continue to deploy and fight in Afghanistan and other parts of the world, the Marine Corps will be required to meet many commitments, both at home and abroad. To

continue to be successful, we must always remember that our individual Marines are our most precious asset, and we must continue to attract and retain the best and brightest into our ranks. Marines are proud of what they do. They are proud of the “Eagle, Globe, and Anchor” and what it represents to our country. With your support, a vibrant Marine Corps will continue to meet our Nation’s call.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.